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Of the numerous occasions on which raven and eagle are introduced in Old English poetry, this is the only one where they hold a conversation. That we find them 'singing' in other places is of little consequence; for the same holds true not only of their companion on the battlefield, the wolf (Exod. 164; El. 27, 112), but likewise of dead objects, like horns, trumpets, swords, coats of mail (cf. for example, Béow. 1423; 1432; 1521; Exod. 159; El. 109; Byrhtn. 284).—In Norse song and saga, on the other hand—as we see from the Eddas—the gift of speech is a common attribute both of ravens and eagles. This may or may not be of significance.

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FRENCH GRAMMAR.

The Essentials of French Grammar by C. H. GRANDGENT. D. C. Heath & Co., Boston: 1900. 12mo, vii, 101 pp.

MR. GRANDGENT'S "Essentials of French Grammar" is practically an enlarged edition of his "Short French Grammar." The wording of many paragraphs is the same as in the older work, the main difference being a fuller explanation of forms and rules, the addition of exercises and the omission of phonetic spelling throughout the grammar. In view of the many additions in Mr. Grandgent's second grammar, it seems unfortunate that he should have selected the title "Essentials." It would appear more proper to call his earlier work the "Essentials of French Grammar." The two titles, as they now stand, will inevitably cause confusion in the minds of teachers who have not examined these grammars.

The excellence of the "Short Grammar" is also a feature of the "Essentials." The same general presentation of the subject-matter is followed, the verb being first considered, whereas the article and the noun are discussed at the very end of the grammar. A brief *résumé* of the leading forms of the article, noun, and adjective precedes the main treatment of the verb, so as to enable the student to translate intelligently the short sentences

given in the numerous exercises accompanying the statement of verbs.

It would be useless to discuss the propriety of making such a complete treatment of the French verb precede the simple rules of article, adjective and pronoun agreement. The claim that the verb forms the principal element in a sentence is taken as a reason for this arrangement. But this argument actually proves too much, for if the grammarians believing in it were true to it, they would have to treat first the more common verbs and the more usual rules governing the use of tenses and moods, then the article, noun, adjective, pronoun, and only towards the end of the grammar, the more complex rules of verb syntax with the varying idiomatic uses of verbs. In other words, the treatment of the parts of speech would have to be divided, and this division would bring the author back to a treatment very similar to that of former grammars. It must further be acknowledged that the older arrangement is more logical in that grammatical forms, which have not been explained, do not have to be used in the illustrations.

The preceding reasoning does not imply that the order followed by Mr. Grandgent in the treatment of his subject is undesirable. It should be taken more as a defence of other grammars than as a criticism of Mr. Grandgent's arrangement, an arrangement which he, of course, does not claim to be original with him. It merely proves that the old order is not necessarily illogical nor harmful, and the inevitable conclusion is that the sequence in treatment is not so important as the clear presentation of the subject-matter itself. In this respect, Mr. Grandgent cannot be too highly praised. Infelicities of statement occur occasionally, some teachers may think that they could improve on the wording of an occasional rule, but no grammar is ever absolutely perfect. Teachers who have used this work are free with their praise, and, assuredly, they are the only competent judges.

As a mere reference book this grammar cannot rank as high as some others. Suggestion plays an important rôle. For example, if a certain rule in the treatment of the verb should suggest a rule of pronoun or adjective agreement, this agreement is explained in the

chapters on verbs. This method may prove successful in teaching grammatical rules, but it is fatal in a work for reference. This is not a fault in the grammar; it may even be considered a merit; but attention should be called to the fact that the "Essentials" is not a reference grammar, and had better not be used as such. A complete index might, to a certain degree, meet this difficulty, but, in this connection, it must be said that Mr. Grandgent's index is practically useless for reference. Under each heading is given a list of paragraphs dealing with some particular grammatical form, and the investigator must look through all these paragraphs to find the matter he wants, to discover perhaps, after his search, that the point he wishes to investigate is not treated at all. This is a decided disadvantage, and should be remedied.

A few special remarks, bearing principally on what has been stated above, may not be inappropriate; p. vi—Might it not be possible to give also a scheme of lessons more in accord with the older treatment of parts of speech? p. 2: 5—Why should not the *u* of *tu* be elided according to this rule? *tu* does not differ in accentuation from *je*. Nor does *qui* differ from *que*; p. 3 (last line but one)—Is "please" a good translation of *donc*? p. 4, l. 1.—Read *naïvement*; p. 6, Note 4—Read "less . . . than;" p. 13: 3—*geai* is pronounced "jè," not "jé." p. 14: 6—The pronunciation of the first *e* in *examen* as "é" is frequent, but does not seem to be justified by the best authority; p. 67—It might be well to make some statement about the agreement of the past participles of reflexive verbs, and of past participles used without auxiliary or followed by an infinitive; p. 68 (A)—Rules for the non-agreement of *fait* might be given; p. 68 *c*—This rule is a case of "suggestion;" p. 78, l. 2—Insert "second and" before "third." p. 94, Supplementary Exercises 1—The introduction of *tu* is confusing; p. 149 *a*—It is a pity to introduce the form *porté-je* before the explanation of its formation (given on p. 152); p. 152 *a*—Mention the common formation of a question by the addition of *n'est-ce pas?* to the positive statement; p. 154 *a, b*—Two other cases of "suggestion;" p. 160: 2, 3—It would seem better to use the expressions "pronominal phrases" and "adjective phrases" (see p. 161 *b*); p. 168

a—Mention the form *si fait*; p. 182—It would be well to distinguish here between *il y a* and *voilà*. This suggestion leads to the question as to whether the English or the French expression should be made the starting-point of a rule. Should the statement be "*il y a* means . . ." or "'there' is rendered by . . . ?" This is not an inappropriate query in the discussion of Mr. Grandgent's grammar, since he uses both forms of statement, and it is important, because on its answer depends often the classifying of a rule. In this particular case, to take the English phrase "there are" as a starting-point would place *il y a* and *voilà* in the chapters on adverbs. There seems to be a slight inconsistency in the author's manner of meeting this difficulty. Perhaps this inconsistency is inevitable. See, for example, p. 289: 1 (second half) where the rule is not clear because the starting-point is the English phrase. On p. 347 *b* English is again the starting-point; p. 211 *b*—*est-ce que je peux?* should be mentioned; pp. 230, 231—Why omit *défailler, échoir, ouïr* and *seoir*? p. 253—Does *envoyer* come under the heading "verbs of motion?" The idea in *venir, aller*, etc., is subjective, whereas in *envoyer*, etc., it is objective; p. 275 *l* (end)—Another case of "suggestion;" p. 285 *a*—The force of this rule cannot be fully grasped by the student, for he is not yet supposed to know what the interrogative pronouns are; p. 301: 270—The old but not unfrequent use of *qui* as interrogative subject referring to an object might be mentioned; p. 312 *a*—An explanation of the construction *c'est (un brave homme) que* would not be inappropriate; p. 314: 282 *b*—Why is this statement brought in here? p. 320: 2 (end)—The statement "in certain cases" is too indefinite, especially since a fairly accurate and comprehensive ruling can be given; p. 331: 4—The use of *jamais* followed by a noun and meaning "never a" might be explained; p. 337—The heading "peculiarities in Singular" may be confusing unless a corresponding heading be inserted on p. 340; p. 343: 307—Is *trois heures et demie* an appropriate illustration? p. 345 *e*—It might be well to state that in other cases *tout* is invariable; p. 347 *b*—Mention the use of *entier*; p. 352: 314—Explain the use of *que de* before an infinitive; p. 359 *a*—Explain the agreement of *nu* and

feu; p. 371: 329—The appositive use of *de* in such phrases as *un diable d'homme* might be explained and illustrated; p. 372 b—The rendering "at (or to) the home of" of *chez* is not sufficient, and will inevitably lead, at times, to incorrect translations.

The following points should be treated; the use of *à* to denote a characteristic. The use of *à* after *être*, as in *il est à plaindre* (possibly in § 78 b).¹ The formation of adverbs by the addition of *-ment*. The use of *ou . . . ou* and of *soit . . . soit* (or *ou*). The use of *que* to avoid the repetition of such adverbs as *quoique*, *lorsque*, *quand*, etc. An explanation of these and other common points would be expected in a grammar intended to cover two or more years of study.

The foregoing remarks have been made only after a cursory glance through the grammar, not after a use of this work in the class-room, and these criticisms are not offered with any intention of fault-finding; they may not even appeal to the best judgment of teachers, but they indicate, to a certain degree, the weak points of Mr. Grandgent's grammar. They are, however, of very minor importance when contrasted with the general excellence of his work. "The Essentials of French Grammar" will be welcomed by all teachers as a useful help in the study of French, and will appeal with especial force to instructors who prefer the author's order in the treatment of his subject to the method employed in the majority of French grammars published in America.

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MODERN GERMAN LITERATURE.

Die deutsche Litteratur des Neunzehnten Jahrhunderts. Von DR. RICHARD M. MEYER. (*Das Neunzehnte Jahrhundert in Deutschlands Entwicklung*, Bd. III.) 2te Auflage. Berlin: G. Bondi, 1900. Pp. xxii, 960.

IT is a reproach brought against German literature that criticism has always followed too closely on the heels of creative work, that it

¹ Here is an illustration of deficiency in the Index. The paragraph dealing with the passive rendering of an active infinitive is not given under the heading "infinitive;" The proper reference is placed under "*faire*" and "*lasser*;" fortunately it is the first given under these headings.

has even occasionally attempted to steal a march upon poetry. The analytical and critical tendency in the German mind has no doubt robbed German poetry in the last two centuries of a certain *naïveté* which belongs to it by nature; for the German national temperament, compared, for instance, with that of the Latin peoples, is essentially *naïve*. On the other hand, it may fairly be urged that German literature might never have attained classic dignity at all, had it not been for the active interference of criticism. However this may be, the gulf between the wholly uncritical poetry of the German Middle Ages and the theory-ridden literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is so great that it is sometimes difficult to conceive of both as coming from the same race; in no literature is it so hard to recognize a process of continuous evolution from the earliest beginnings to the present day as in that of Germany; indeed, were it not for the existence of an unbroken *Volkslitteratur* which forms the basis for such an evolution, it would be impossible. In even the least balanced *Flegeljahre* of New High German literature there is, if the expression be permissible, a certain *Zielbewusstsein*; the critic and the theorist seem to be standing constantly in the background, explaining how certain results have been arrived at and marking the lines on which the literature of the future must develop. To appreciate the present volume, this prerogative, which German criticism, back to the times of Opitz and Gottsched, has so persistently assumed, must be borne in mind; Professor Meyer does not merely write history; he also takes an active share in the literary evolution of the moment.

Whether this quality of *Zielbewusstsein* is to be regarded as an evil or not, it at least materially lightens the task of the literary historian, and especially the historian of recent and contemporary literature. German literature in the nineteenth century has not been one whit less confused or confusing than that of any other European people, but the mere fact that the Germans have had clearer ideas than other nations as to what their literature was doing, and whither it was tending, has made the task of writing the history of that literature easier. The path which the modern historian of German literature must tread is pretty well marked